IDEA - 0607
Copy 5 of 5

21 December 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR : Chief, Special Projects Branch, DPD-DD/P

SUBJECT : Altimeter for U-2

1. Reference your memo IDEA 0587, above subject, dated 7 December 1961, information on altimeters is given in the following paragraphs. In answer to your comment on high accuracy over a limited range at high altitudes, there is no known provision in any present altimeter for an adjustment of this type. Altimeters could be built to meet this requirement; the cost of such an instrument would probably be out of proportion, however, to the value of the product. The most feasible course, both economically and accuracy-wise, is considered to be the use of a conventional type altimeter of high accuracy and reliability. In event of procurement of more precise instruments, the present performance data on the U-2 will have to be spot-checked and re-run and revised where necessary.

2. There are at least three altimeters on the market with claims of accuracy that are within the limits desired (200 feet at 70,000 feet). One of these, made by Bulova, has a claimed maximum error of 10 feet at sea level, 250 feet at 80,000 and 600 feet at 100,000 feet. The cost of this item is reported to be $4800. Others with similar accuracy claims are made by Litton, and by Fisher and Porter. This
25X1A information has been passed on to [redacted] of Lockheed on 20 December 1961 for review. In addition to these commercially available types, the Models C-19 and AAU/88 are to be considered by Lockheed.

25X1A 3. When discussing the altimetry problem with [redacted] he assured me that Lockheed was cognizant of the problem and that a continuous investigation was being conducted to provide an acceptable solution. He will report on progress in the near future.

4. In the interim until the problem is resolved, it is recommended that the pilot technique of bracketing airspeed be used and higher fuel reserves be allowed in planning.

SIGNED

25X1A [redacted]
Lt. Colonel USAF

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